RAJYA SABHA

Wednesday, the 3rd June, 1998/
13 Jyaistha, 1920 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the clock, **Mr. Chairman** *in the Chair.*

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Areas under Acute Poverty

*101. SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL: Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have ever conducted any survey to identify areas of various States/Union Territories which are still reeling under acute poverty;

(b) if so, which are these areas together with their population; and

(c) whether Government have prepared any special plan for their speedy development; if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) A Committee was constituted on 6.2.1997 by the Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment under the Chairmanship of Dr. E.A.S. Sarma with the following terms of reference;

(i) To recommend criteria for deciding 100 most backward and poorest districts in the country.

(ii) To identify such districts in various States, as per suggested criteria.

(iii) To suggest an appropriate definition of the term 'infrastructure development' and to identify the specific sectors to be included therein.

(iv) Any other related issues.

(b) A list of 100 most backward districts, as identified by the Committee and their respective population as per 1991 Census is annexed. (*See* below)

(c) The Report of the Committee is under consideration.

List of 100 most backward districts identified by the Committee

100 most Backward poorest Districts (Statewise)	Population as per Census 1991
BIHAR	
1. NALANDA	2003313
2. BHOJPUR	2867318
3. RANCHI	2205034
4. AURANGABAD	1537946
5. JEHANABAD	1173071
6. GAYA	2665217
7. NAVADA	1358433
8. SARAN	2562930
9. SIWAN	2159346
10. GOPALGANJ	1701365
11. PACHIM CHAMPARAN	2330610
12. PURBA CHAMPARAN	3042303
13. SITAMARHI	2388822
14. MUZAFFARPUR	2946601
15. VAISHALI	2144252
16. BEGUSARAI	1813214
17. SAMASTIPUR	2715297
18. DARBHANGA	2509083
19. MADHUBANI	2828640
20. SAHARSA	2514751
21. MADHEPURA	1178060
22. PURNIA	1876287
23. KATIHAR	1821590
24. KHAGARIA	986731
25. MUNGER	3055135
26. BHAGALPUR	3198471
27. GODDA	858678
28. SAHIBGANJ	1297391
29. DUMKA	1497266
30. DEOGHAR	918323
31. GIRIDIH	2224006
32. HAZARIBAG	2838836
33. PALAMU	2451048
34. LOHARDAGA	288585
35. GUHIA	1153557
36. PASHMI SINGHBUM	1789796
37. ARARIA	1611145
38. KISHANGANJ	986672
DADRA & NAGAR HAVELI	
39. DADRA & NAGAR HAVELI	138401
HARYANA	
40. KAITHAL	818352
HIMACHAL PRADESH	
41. HAMIRPUR	359322

100 most Backward poorest Districts (Statewise)	Population as per Census 1991
KARNATAKA	
42. BIDAR	1252333
MADHYA PRADESH	
43. TIKAMGARH	940609
44. CHHATARPUR	1158853
45. PANNA	684721
46. SAGAR	1646198
47. DAMOH	897544
48. KARGONE	2082145
49. KHANDWA	1431662
50. VIDISHA	971079
51. SEHORE	840427
52. RAISEN	877369
53. BETUL	1180527
54. HOSHANGABAD	1265970
55. NARSIMHAPUR	784523
56. MANDLA	1291313
57. CHHINDWARA	1563332
58. SEONI	999762
59. BALAGHAT	1362731
60. RAJNANDGAON	1439524
61. SARGUJA	2082630
MAHARASHTRA	
62. AURANGABAD	2209476
63. JALNA	1362546
64. PARBHANI	2114770
65. BEED	1818499
66. NANDED	2326100
67. OSMANABAD	1271870
68. LATUR	1673070
69. BULDANA	1881446
70. GADCHIROLI	785626
71. YAVATMAL	2077144
ORISSA	
72. PHULBANI	858553
73. KALAHANDI	1591984
74. KORAPUT	2999903
75. KEONJHAR	1337026
RAJASTHAN	
76. DUNGARPUR	874329
77. BANSWARA	1154964
SIKKIM	
78. WEST SIKKIM	97713
79. SOUTH SIKKIM	99500
UTTAR PRADESH	
80. SITAPUR	2850059
81. HARDOI	2741486
82. UNNAO	2198174
83. RAE BARELI	2320709
84. JALAUN	1217021
85. LALITPUR	745632
86. HAMIRPUR	1465707
87. BANDA	1874541
88. FATEHPUR	1893400
89. PRATAPGARH	2211253
90. BAHRAICH	2757862
91. BARA BANKI	2425309
92. SIDDHARTHNAGAR	1706634
93. MAHARAJGANJ	1678131
94. JHANSI	1426984
95. MAU	1418872
96. KANPUR DEHAT	2136534
WEST BENGAL	
97. KOOCH BIHAR	2158169
98. JALPAIGURI	2789827
99. MALDAH	2633942
100. DARJEELING	1335618

SHRI SANATAN BISI: Sir, with your permission, I want to raise a point of order relating to this question. It has been mentioned in the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha that no point of order can be raised on questions put in the Question Hour. However, there may be circumstances where points of order need to be raised...

MR. CHAIRMAN: What is your point of order?

SHRI SANATAN BISI: The answer given by the Minister is incomplete and misleading. Earlier also in this House, similar questions had been put. As far as poverty alleviation programme is concerned, a programme was formulated in the State of Orissa. And, for this purpose, Rs. 4,500 crores were allocated in 1995. But the hon. Minister's answer is completely silent on this aspect. Nothing has been mentioned about those programmes....

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is no point of order on this. Mr. Rajagopal.

SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have, in this question, raised a very important issue relating to some of the most backward areas. There is acute poverty prevailing in those

areas even after 50 years of Independence probably because of lopsided planning or whatever the reason is. I wanted to know whether the Government had conducted an enquiry, if so, what the result of the enquiry was and whether the areas still reeling under acute poverty had been identified. I also wanted to know what step the Government proposed to take to solve this problem. I am sorry to say that the answer is scant, quite insufficient, and unsatisfactory. But I realise that the hon. Minister, who is to answer this question, is making his maiden attempt now. Therefore, I would not like to go into details. All the same, I would like to know what criterion has been followed to identify the backward areas. The hon. Minister's answer says that on 6.2.97, a Committee was constituted under Dr. E.A.S. Sarma, and it had submitted its report. He has mentioned about that Report. But still it does not make it clear as to what are the criteria for identifying the most backward areas. This is one point which I would like to know.

SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL: Sir, a Committee was constituted on 6.2.97 by the Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment under the Chairmanship of Dr. E.A.S. Sarma to recommend criteria for deciding 100 most backward and poorest districts in the country, to identify such districts in various States, as per suggested criteria, to suggest an appropriate definition of the term 'infrastructure development' and to identify the specific sectors to be included therein. But, Sir, the Report is mostly based on the available....

MR. CHAIRMAN: What are the criteria recommended by the Committee?

SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL: Poverty criteria.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Poverty is a very small thing.

SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL: I think he can inform me later on. The second supplementary is, I wanted to know in my question what the specific schemes of the Government are to meet this problem of acute poverty in certain areas.

SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL: Employment generation schemes and self-employment schemes.

SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL: I think those things are general. Apart from employment schemes and poverty alleviation schemes, there are a number of schemes. We have a long list of such schemes like the Rojgar Yojana, Indira Awas Yojana, food for work scheme, poor feeding scheme, old age pension, IRDP, Jeevan Dhara, Amrit Dhara. There are so many things. But to meet this specific problem, have they drawn up any specific plan to counter this problem? This is what I want to know.

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: I think we shall have to demand a Half-an-Hour discussion on this. My specific question is this. You said poverty is the criterion. Can I come to the conclusion from your observation that these are the districts where the largest number of poverty-stricken people are residing and on the basis of that you have decided to identify, I mean your Committee, has decided to identify these 100 districts? Are you consulting or not? The Committee was set up on 6.2.97. In relation to that I would like to know whether they have submitted their reports. I am asking this because in the last part of the reply you have said that the report of the Committee is under consideration. Therefore, the dates are relevant. I would like to know on which date Government received the report and by what time your consideration will be over and after the consideration is over, are you going to take it up, as Mr. Rajagopal has suggested, certain concrete steps to help identify these 100 poorest districts to come out of the present state of affairs?

SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL: The Committee submitted its report in November 1997.

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: What about the first part where the criteria are adopted by the Committee, depending on the number of poverty-stricken people?

SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL: Sir, we are examining the report of the Committee.

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: My goodness, I am not asking you to examine the report. You do it by all means. My specific question is, you said in reply to the first question that poverty was the criterion on the basis of which the Committee identified 100 districts.

In that relation I want to ask whether these hundred districts are having the largest number of persons below the poverty line. You say either yes or no.

SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL: Sir, according to the Committee, yes.

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: I think the Minister should take some time to prepare his answers.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the hon. Minister has a very detailed knowledge of the problems of rural people because he comes from an agricultural background. My question is that there was a mention about poverty alleviation programmes. Earlier there were Lakadawla Committee recommendations. Subsequently, the Government appointed another committee under the chairmanship of Shri Sarma. Both the recommendations are before the Government. Is the Government considering recommendations of both the committees or is it considering the recommendations of the Sarma Committee only?

Secondly, is there any specific programme before the Government to uplift the poorest of the poor on the lines of the Antyodaya Programme, that is, identifying five or ten families in each village and then giving them some sort of assistance to uplift them from poverty? Is there any specific proposal before the Government? If there is no proposal before the Government, will the Government consider this particular suggestion and give it serious consideration? Along with that, there are certain backward areas in the country. There is a mention in the programme of the Government also, that is, the National Agenda, about the backward areas development programme. Is the Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment concerned about it? Have they given any thought to that subject? Have they prepared any schemes?

SHRI BABAGOUD PATIL: Sir, we are considering the reports of both the committees. We have also constituted an internal committe for that.

SHRI PRANAB MUKERJEE: That committee has nonthing to do with it. That is about the poverty line. That has nothing to do wih the identification of hundred districts.

SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL: Poverty line is one of the criteria, Sir. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Mr. Chairmah, Sir, there may be a half-an-hour discussion on this. And let us go to the next question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We will have a half-an-hour discussion on this and the hon. Members may send their points so that the Minister can possibly reply to all of them.

Employment generation scheme in rural areas

*102. SHRI PARAG CHALIHA: Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state the details of proposed employment generation schemes etc. to be launched for rural population in different States by the Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL): The Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment is implementing the following programmes for employment generation in the rural areas:—

1. Jawahar Rojgar Yojana (JRY),
2. Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS),
3. Million Wells Scheme (MWS)
4. Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP),
5. Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA),
6. Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM), and
7. Supply of Improved Toolkits to Rural Artisans (SITRA).

While JRY, EAS and MWS are the wage-employment programmes, the others are self-employment programme. The ministry has recognised the increasing need to strengthen, restructure and streamline the present programmes to make them more effective, transparent and result-oriented. There is,